United Nations S/PV.7550

Security Council

Seventieth year

Provisional

7550th meeting

Thursday, 5 November 2015, 11.10 a.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Rycroft	(United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)
Members:	Angola	Mr. Lucas
	Chad	Mr. Cherif
	Chile	Mr. Barros Melet
	China	Mr. Zhao Yong
	France	Mr. Lamek
	Jordan	Mrs. Kawar
	Lithuania	Mrs. Jakubonė
	Malaysia	Mrs. Adnin
	New Zealand	Mr. Van Bohemen
	Nigeria	Mr. Adamu
	Russian Federation	Mr. Churkin
	Spain	Mr. Oyarzun Marchesi
	United States of America	Ms. Power
	Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)	Mr. Ramírez Carreño

Agenda

The situation in Libya

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the translation of speeches delivered in other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council. Corrections* should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room U-0506 (verbatimrecords@un.org). Corrected records will be reissued electronically on the Official Document System of the United Nations (http://documents.un.org).

15-35206 (E)

Accessible document Please recycle

The meeting was called to order at 11.10 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Libya

The President: In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representative of Libya to participate in this meeting.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite Mr. Bernardino León, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Support Mission in Libya, to participate in this meeting.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I now give the floor to Mr. León.

Mr. León: Since the high-level meeting on Libya that took place on the margins of the General Assembly on 2 October, the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) convened what should have been a final round of talks in Skhirat, Morocco, to facilitate Libyan deliberations on the composition of the presidency council that would lead the country's future Government of national accord.

After four days of intensive consultations, which concluded on 8 October, members of the Libyan political process succeeded in forging consensus on a list of six nominees, including a Prime Minister-designate, three deputy Prime Ministers and two Senior Ministers. The proposed composition of the presidency council was seen as a means of securing the necessary consensus and inclusivity that would allow for a Government of national accord to assume office with the requisite support and backing of all relevant political and security stakeholders, as well as the Libyan public at large. While the proposal was hailed as a major breakthrough in the dialogue process, strong objections were voiced in some quarters, notably from within the House of Representatives, for what was perceived as inadequate representation for the east, particularly Benghazi.

In the three weeks that followed the announcement of the proposed composition of the presidency council, the United Nations has consulted closely with parties from across the political spectrum in an effort to resolve outstanding concerns regarding representation. In this regard, there appears to be growing support to the idea of expanding the presidency council as a means of consolidating and safeguarding Libya's historical traditions of geographical and regional balance and representation.

Despite the adoption of the 21 October constitutional timeline by which we had hoped that a final political settlement would be agreed and endorsed by the main political stakeholders, there is yet to be a formal and final pronouncement by either of the main political stakeholders on the Libyan political agreement and the proposed presidency council. Working closely with representatives of the international community, the United Nations Support Mission in Libya continued to impress upon both the Libyan House of Representatives and the Tripoli-based General National Congress the need to urgently convene sessions that would allow for a democratic vote on the political agreement and proposals for the presidency council.

From the moment of its inception, the United Nations-facilitated Libyan political dialogue process has always been predicated on the assumption that it would be inclusive of all parties and that any solution put forward would have to be viable and comprehensive such that it would bring to an end the bitter political institutional divide that has been at the heart of the conflict that has brought much destruction and suffering to Libya and its people. While I have always remained hopeful about the chances of Libya's leaders reaching a peaceful agreement, I have had no illusions about the difficulties and challenges that would likely face the political dialogue process.

As I have noted on numerous occasions before the Council, there can be no viable peace in Libya without the constructive engagement and buy-in of all the parties. Forging a meaningful consensus and arriving at a balanced political agreement was likely to be a protracted and difficult process. Success would always be dependent on the parties' collective endorsement of an agreement. Likewise, Libyan ownership of the dialogue process and of its outcomes has been at the heart of the United Nations mediation efforts. This is a principle that is simply non-negotiable.

But the magnitude of the dangers facing Libya should also not be underestimated. This is a message that I continue to reiterate to all the parties in Libya, including to the leaderships of both the House of Representatives and the General National Congress. The country's economic and finances are already showing signs of fatigue and rapid decline. The absence

of effective authority is manifesting itself in growing insecurity and criminality across many parts of the country. The growing influence of terrorist and other extremist groups is posing a direct threat to the very authority of the Libyan State. The cruelty and barbarity witnessed in areas under their control are an omen of what may yet come unless there is united action to contain and eliminate this growing threat.

Equally important is the scale of the human suffering. The political and military conflict has exacted a heavy toll on the Libyan people. Death and displacement have become an all-too common theme, particularly in Benghazi, which has for the longest duration borne the brunt of the conflict in Libya. Massive displacement of population, the destruction of entire civilian neighbourhoods and vital infrastructure, and large-scale human rights abuses that continue to take place on a regular basis have scarred the city beyond recognition. The cowardly targeting by terrorists of peaceful demonstrators in the city on 23 October was an urgent reminder of the need to expedite efforts towards peace, and that restoring peace and stability to Benghazi will be the first step towards stabilizing Libya. Illegal migration and human trafficking, the disruption to basic services and shortages in food and medicines have also added another important dimension to the human suffering unfolding in Libya.

I wish to take this opportunity to remind Libya's leaders, particularly the leaderships of both the House of Representatives and the General National Congress, that they shoulder a political and moral responsibility to draw the Libyan dialogue process to a successful conclusion. There can be no further justification for delaying any longer a vote by their respective memberships on the outcome of the dialogue process. In this regard, a majority of members within both the House of Representatives and the General National Congress have signed letters stating clearly their determination to endorse the outcomes of the political dialogue process. The respective leaderships of both houses have an obligation to take note, uphold the democratic principles which they have been entrusted with, and facilitate a debate and vote on the issue in accordance with existing rules of procedure and without threat or intimidation.

In the interest of upholding the democratic process and ensuring institutional unity, I urge the respective leadership of the House of Representatives and of the General National Congress to listen to calls within their respective houses, and those of the Libyan people, and to desist from any further attempts and manoeuvring to obstruct the democratic process and undermine the achievements of the dialogue process.

The same message has also been echoed across the spectrum of Libya's political and civil society, including by participants from the different tracks of the Libyan political dialogue process, as well as by numerous armed groups that have been party to the military conflict over the past year. Among all there is a growing sense of urgency and an insistence that the country should no longer be held hostage to the narrow interests of a few on either side of the political divide.

Libya's leaders have a unique opportunity to reach a political settlement that spares their country and their people further bloodshed and destruction. The political agreement negotiated within the framework of the dialogue process is the result of a year-long complex process of negotiations and compromises that have sought to create a viable middle ground on which all Libyans can meet. The proposed agreement was never intended to provide a panacea for all of Libya's problems, but rather to lay out a set of structures and principles that would guide the next phase of Libya's political transition until such time as the constitution-making process was completed. I therefore call on Libya's leaders to uphold Libya's higher national interests and safeguard their country's national unity, independence and territorial integrity. They owe that to their country and to the Libyan people.

The next few days will be critical to Libya's future. While the United Nations will continue to encourage the two main political stakeholders to formally endorse the political agreement and the proposed composition of the presidency council, it will also continue working with the moderate voices from the different dialogue tracks and from across Libya's political and civil society spectrum, as well as those among security actors, for the sake of forging a viable way forward.

The United Nations and the international community must also be prepared to move quickly in mobilizing support for a future Libyan Government of national accord. The task facing any such Government will be daunting, and the technical, human and material resources needed to address existing challenges would be beyond the capacities of Libya's much-weakened State institutions. In reassuring Libya's leaders of the international community's commitment and determination to undertake every effort to provide

the requisite support and assistance to a future Libyan Government of national accord, they must be reminded that the onus is now on them to forge a new political reality and bring about a decisive and permanent end to their country's political turmoil and armed conflict.

The President: I thank Mr. León for his briefing.

I now give the floor to the representative of Libya.

Mr. Dabbashi (Libya) (*spoke in Arabic*): I would like to thank Mr. Bernardino León, Special Representative of the Secretary-General, for his important briefing. I also thank him and his team for their efforts over the past year to facilitate the dialogue among the Libyan parties and the establishment of a Government of national accord that represents all Libyans and places the interests of the country above all other considerations. There is no doubt that, thanks to those efforts, we are considerably closer to that goal, in spite of the exceedingly difficult conditions under which they have had to work. As his mandate comes to an end, I would like to take this opportunity to thank him for all his efforts to re-establish stability in Libya and safeguard the unity and sovereignty of my country. I wish him every success in future.

We have taken note of media reports that the Secretary-General has appointed a new Special Representative to replace Mr. León. We hope that the way he has been named will not pose an obstacle to his work. We also hope that he will be accepted by the Libyan parties and that he will be able to continue the work begun by his predecessor in order to move forward towards concluding the mission.

On 30 September, Mr. Agila Saleh Essa Gwaider, President of the General National Council, stated before the General Assembly:

> "the vast majority [of the Libyan people are] seeking any possible means to put an end to the unjustified fighting among brothers, and restore the security and stability of the country. Nevertheless, they are hostage to the armed groups, and thus unable to express their views."

He also stated that

> "[h]undreds of thousands of Libyans have become internally displaced persons or refugees aspiring to return to their homes as soon as possible. That could be fulfilled only through an agreement on a strong Government that enjoys the confidence of all Libyans, controls all of the Libyan territory and is supported by the international community." (*A/70/PV.20, pp. 18-19*)

In that way, the President candidly expressed the feelings of the Libyan people, who can no longer stand the noise of bullets and shells, can no longer bear the smell of gunpowder and blood — and who can no longer bear foreign interference. Will the Security Council help them? Some Libyans doubt it, given their experience in the dialogue and because of the many steps backward. Nevertheless, there is no doubt that the Libyan political dialogue is reaching an end and that the establishment of a Government of national accord is imminent, perhaps before the end of this month.

In spite of all that, however, neither the Council nor the Special Representative of the Secretary-General has expressed a clear position to say that those who oppose the agreement and who support terrorism will have neither a place in the Government of national accord nor in the State institutions that emerge from the political agreement. Nor have we heard any serious positions with regard to ensuring a secure environment to allow the Government to begin its work from its institutions based in Tripoli.

Unfortunately, it seems that some in the United Nations Support Mission in Libya still think they can benefit from the support of militias to protect the Government, seemingly unaware of the fact that militias have blackmailed every single Government of the past four years. The Libyan people reject the idea of having these militias play any role whatsoever in the area of security, except for those of their members who agree to join the army or the police, following the required medical examinations and appropriate training.

Protecting Government and State institutions that are accepted by all must be done through the creation of a neutral special force composed of officers and elements of the army and the police — professional elements who have proved that they have not been involved in any illegal activities. They could then in future be deployed to Tripoli to carry out a disarmament programme. In addition, bonuses must no longer be paid to any members of the militia who have not laid down their arms.

The Security Council must once and for all disabuse itself of the notion, which a number of States within the Council are attempting to foster, that groups such as Ansar Al-Sharia, Al-Qaida and those who call themselves the revolutionary councils of Darna,

Benghazi and Ajdabiya are going to fight against Daesh. The Council must bring pressure to bear on all parties to the dialogue to ensure that they clearly state their opposition to the terrorist groups. An end must be put to their financing by the Central Bank of Libya through what is called the Ministry of Defence of Tripoli. The flow of weapons and foreign fighters towards the militias must also come to an end.

Genuine stability in Libya cannot be achieved through foreign interference on Libyan territory. That will come about only as a result of support for the rehabilitation and deployment of police forces through the cantonment of elements of the army and its restructuring, rehabilitation and arming, so as to enable it to combat terrorism and uphold security, including on the borders.

Any attempt to hamper any of these efforts can be due only to a determination to sow the seeds of despair among Libyans, with a view to badgering them into accepting foreign military intervention, which will have as its inevitable result the occupation and division of Libya.

By way of conclusion, I wish to state that the power vacuum resulting from the fall of the dictatorship can be remedied only through the holding of presidential elections at the earliest possible time. This can happen only if the international community devotes the necessary attention to the work of the constitutional drafting committee and if it helps it to overcome the minor obstacles — I repeat, the minor obstacles — on its path to submitting a draft constitution as soon as possible.

The President: There are no more names inscribed on the list of speakers. I now invite Council members to informal consultations to continue our discussion on the subject.

The meeting rose at 11.35 a.m.